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ACTION SCT-00

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	A-00	CA-00	CCO-00	CG-00
	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00
	VC-00	FRB-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	IO-00
	JUSE-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	M-00	AC-00	DCP-01
	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-00	OMB-00	OPIC-01	PA-00
	TFBI-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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UNCLAS BANGKOK 007909

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PTER, TH
SUBJECT: THAILAND: INPUT FOR ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: STATE 301352

1. (U) Summary. Thailand emerged as a regional leader in the Global War on Terror in 2003. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra publicly expressed the will of the Royal Thai Government (RTG) to closely cooperate with the US and other nations against terrorists. Domestically, Thailand enhanced its own capacity to fight terror by putting in place new anti-terror laws, taking steps to improve its border controls, and strengthening its legal ability to identify, block, and freeze terrorist financial assets. Internationally, Thailand dispatched military engineers to Afghanistan and Iraq to help with reconstruction tasks, and supported a more aggressive diplomatic anti-terror policy in multiple fora, culminating with adoption of the "Bangkok Goals" at the 2003 APEC Leader's summit. Most importantly, Thailand captured and prosecuted suspected members of international terrorist organizations for the first time in 2003. End Summary.

2. (U) The following information is provided in the format prescribed in the reftel.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
DATE/CASE ID: 12 MAY 2009 200706444 DECONTROLLED/UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION A: SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS TAKEN BY THAILAND TO SUPPORT THE GLOBAL COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM.

3. (SBU) On August 11, Thai police officials captured Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, suspected of being a senior Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) leader with close ties to Al-Qaida.

4. (U) On June 10, Thai authorities arrested Wae Mahadi Wae Da-oh, Bozuru Haji Abdulloh, and Muyai Abdulloh in Southern Thailand, all suspected to be either JI supporters or operatives. A fourth suspect, Samarn Waekaji surrendered to police on July 8. The four are implicated in a conspiracy to bomb a number of high profile targets and tourist venues in Thailand including the Embassies of the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, Singapore, and Australia.

5. (U) On August 11, the King signed the Prime Minister's request for the issuance of an emergency anti-terrorist decree, similar to an executive order, which gives the RTG powerful new legal tools to fight terrorism. These measures establish the criminal offense of terrorism in the penal code and make that offense a predicate under the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA). The executive decree was approved after nearly two years of parliamentary consideration. While existing RTG legislation does not cover terrorist financing, Thailand is planning to expand its Anti Money Laundering Act to include terrorism.

6. (U) In the international arena, Thailand is active diplomatically in the global effort against terrorism, and recently hosted a meeting of the APEC Counter-Terrorism Task Force in Phuket. Thailand's Anti Money Laundering Office (AMLO) is a designated financial intelligence unit (FIU) in the Egmont Group, and Thailand is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG).

7. (SBU) In 2003, the RTG and the Bank of Thailand (BOT) continued to cooperate closely with the USG on reviewing and disseminating the E.O. 13224 terrorist financing list and its annexes. To date, the RTG has not identified any entities on the list, and no assets have been blocked or frozen. Thailand also joined the U.S. and other economies in co-sponsoring an APEC study of alternative remittance systems (ARS), which while not explicitly linked to terrorist financing, will provide additional insight into the workings of the Thai financial system.

8. (U) The RTG has signed, and is in the process of

ratifying, the International Convention for the Suppression of Financing Terrorism, a key agreement in the global effort to control the flow of funds to terrorist organizations. This raises to five out of a total of twelve the number of multilateral terrorism conventions that Thailand has signed:

--The Convention on Offenses and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, 1963.

--The Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, 1970.

--The Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, 1971.

--The protocol on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, 1988.

SECTION B: THE RESPONSE OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM TO ACTS OF TERRORISM

9. (U) Court hearings in the case of the four suspected JI members arrested in Narathiwat began on November 18. The four have been charged with endangering Thailand's external security, membership in a secret criminal organization, and criminal conspiracy. A decision in this case is not expected before 2004. There were no significant acts of terrorism in Thailand during the past year, and the RTG's effectiveness in precluding a terrorist incident during the APEC Summit in October was considered a major success both domestically and internationally.

SECTION C: EXTRADITION

10. (SBU) Thailand did not extradite nor request the extradition of any suspected terrorists in 2003.

SECTION D: IMPEDIMENTS TO PROSECUTION AND EXTRADITION

11. (U) There did not appear to be any significant impediments to either the prosecution or extradition of terrorists in Thailand during 2003.

SECTION E: OTHER HOST NATION RESPONSES TO TERRORISM

12. (SBU) Thai cooperation with the United States on counter terrorism, intelligence, and law enforcement was excellent in 2003 and continues to improve. Thailand's support for

international terrorism investigations in Southeast Asia has been commendable. These combined efforts resulted in the capture and prosecution of suspected terrorists in Thailand, both Thai nationals and international terrorists attempting to use it as a safe haven.

13. (U) In statements made on October 1, Prime Minister Thaksin pointedly stressed the critical importance of counter terrorism cooperation with the US. He said that, in addition to being a party to international conventions and UN resolutions on terrorism, "Thailand has been a treaty ally with the United States for 170 years; the first in Asia. Whatever we can do (in support of the US alliance) that does not harm our other friends, we will do." The PM then stated, "terrorism is not a threat only for the US; all nations must work together (in the battle against terrorism)." Thaksin added that he expected security issues and cooperative international efforts against terrorism to be raised in all multilateral forums.

SECTION F: MAJOR COUNTER TERRORISM EFFORTS

14. (U) Thailand, host of the 2003 APEC Leader's summit, was instrumental in persuading the members of APEC to support a US objective for the meeting, adoption of the "Bangkok Goals," which place security concerns on an equal footing with the economic objectives that previously dominated this forum. Prime Minister Thaksin, in his role as Chair of the meeting, played a central role in this effort.

15. (U) Throughout most of 2003, Thailand provided a 130-man force supporting the US led Operation Enduring Freedom coalition in Afghanistan. The Thai composite company of engineers and medical personnel worked out of Bagram, Afghanistan, repairing the national airfield and providing medical care. The force redeployed to Thailand in September.

16. (SBU) Thailand took significant steps in 2003 to enhance regional efforts against terror in Southeast Asia. Government-to-government cooperation between Thailand and other ASEAN states has expanded, making it more difficult for members of regional terror groups to hop from country to country while evading national law enforcement agencies. With regard specifically to regional law enforcement efforts, Thailand is now a participant in the Southeast Asia Counter Terrorism Center, based in Malaysia, which provides training to agencies specializing in CT. Thailand also hosts some CT training within its own borders at the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Bangkok.

17. (SBU) Thailand is working closely with the United States to enhance the security of its borders by upgrading to more effective, state of the art controls. The Royal Thai Government is moving forward with implementation of TIP/PISCES, a US-supplied system for immigration tracking and identification. On June 10, Thailand joined the Container Security Initiative (CSI). Progress on export controls has been steady, but slower than might have been hoped for, probably due to Thai concerns that the cost of enhanced security measures could reduce the competitiveness of its ports. There is considerable room for improvement in this area, and the US has just signed a $500,000 US Trade and

Development Agency grant agreement to start a secure port and supply chain project.

SECTION G: HOST GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

18. (U) None.

SECTION H: PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY THAILAND IN SUPPORT STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM ON TERROR RELATED ISSUES

19. (U) None.

SECTION I: SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE HOST GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD TERRORISM

20. (SBU) In 2003, the RTG moved very publicly beyond previous doubts about the nature of the regional and global terrorist threat. PM Thaksin has now forthrightly confronted the threat in Southeast Asia and taken steps domestically to counter it. Thailand dispatched military engineers in support of U.S.-led coalitions engaged in reconstruction in Afghanistan and Iraq. Counter-terrorism cooperation with the US has been close all along, but the real change in attitude at the political level began in the wake of the Bali bombings. As part of Prime Minister Thaksin's sponsorship of security as a complementary mission to APEC's trade and development objectives, he identified with the American initiative, he openly acknowledged the Thai Government's commitment to fighting the Global War on Terror, and stood proudly on his record of cooperation with the U.S. and other nations.
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